production of cloth. The pig and the chicken were, with the dog, the omnipresent live stock, and there were other domestic animals. Irrigation on a large scale came in the latter part of the period.

Iron came into use sometime during the dynasty. The coming of metallic money must have wrought changes in the economy of the land.

As in the Shang, a sharp distinction seems to have existed between the lower, or peasant, and the upper, or aristocratic, classes. The lower were occupied with cultivating the soil. The upper classes did the governing. So marked was the difference that a suggestion has been made, as yet quite unproved, that the peasants were a conquered group, the descendants of the neolithic population, and the aristocracy victorious invaders, possibly of another race, owing their position in part to their more powerful organization and better material equipment. Bronze weapons and implements, for example, may originally have been the possession of the aristocracy, so helping to give them the ascendancy.

The distinction appears to have been accentuated by or at least to have had some association with the growth of towns. During the Chou urban civilization was spreading, centering in capitals of the feudal princes and of the *Wang*. Between city dwellers and the rural population a gulf tended to exist. The town, dominated hy the aristocracy, seems to have had a market place, an altar to the earth—& raised mound of beaten soil—and the ancestral temple of the ruling lord. It was surrounded by a wall and a moat. This town may have succeeded in part the earlier holy place which had been the center of peasant life, an identification which may have assisted the feudal

chiefs in their domination of the rural community.

Tradition asserts that land was divided according to the *ching t'ien* or "well-field" system. While some scholars regard this as an imaginary creation of later Utopian philosophers, probably it had an actual basis in fact. On the other hand, presumably it was never systematically carried out on any such large scale as some writers have supposed. By this device the arable land was assigned in sections to eight peasant families each. Every section was plotted in a form resembling the Chinese character for well, *ching, 3fcj* the eight outer plots being cultivated in common by